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The Southern Frontier

We dedicate ourselves to the task of doing the most and the best that can be done here and now.

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SRC to Seek Mass Membership for Action

Outstanding Virginia Businessman Heads SRC for 1946. Georgia Liberal Elected Vice-President. North Carolina Educator Named New Associate Executive Director.

THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL headed by a vigorous Virginia businessman with a long record of service for Southern progress and better race relations, prepared this month to launch in the coming year a campaign to enlist a mass membership of Southerners and organize a foundation for greater region-wide action on the basis of plans approved at the Council's second annual meeting in Atlanta, November 14.

Paul D. Williams of Richmond, Va., vice-president of Mentzer, Bush and Company, book publishers, and vice-president of the National Council of Catholic Men, was elected president of the Council for the coming year. Frank W. Spencer, Savannah, Ga., was elected vice-president succeeding Dr. Homer P. Rainey, of Texas. Reelected vice-presidents were P. B. Young, Norfolk, Va., and Carter Wesley, Houston, Texas.

Dr. Harold L. Trigg, president of Elizabeth City (N. C.) State Teachers College and prominent Negro educator of North Carolina, was elected associate executive director to succeed Dr. Ira DeA. Reid, Atlanta University, resigned. Dr. Reid, who has served in the post on a part-time basis, will remain on the Council staff on the same basis as research consultant. Other executive officers were reelected.

Fills Odum's Prescription

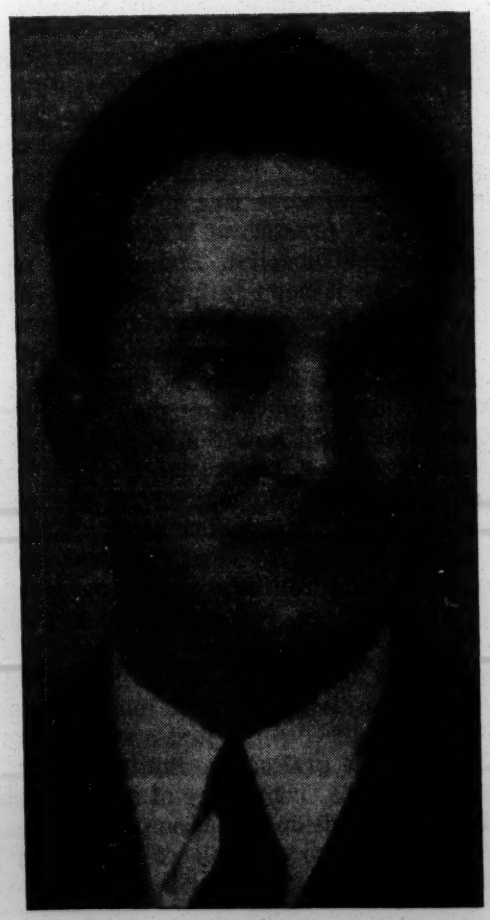
Mr. Williams, who succeeds Dr. Howard Odum of the University of North Carolina, fills Dr. Odum's long-sought prescription for an energetic, prominent Southern businessman to head SRC's expanding activities. The new president brings to the Council valuable experience in business coupled with a background of whole-hearted work in social agencies and race relations activities. He was instrumental in the organization of the Catholic Committee of the South, a group that has achieved much in the fight for Southern development and the betterment of race relations; recently he was honored as one of two recipients of the 1945 James J. Hoey Award for Interracial Justice, a national tribute of recognition.

Dr. Odum, a guiding spirit in the Council's origin and development, remains as a member of the board of directors and a tireless worker for the creation of a new and better South for all peoples.

Commander Spencer, holding a Coast Guard commission throughout the war, is master pilot and manager of the Atlantic Towing Company; he has a long and effective record in community service and progressive leadership, is a member of the Chatham County (Ga.) Board of Education and chairman of the committee for the Georgia Academy for the Blind.

Dr. Trigg, a graduate of Morgan College, Baltimore, and of Syracuse University, has wide experience in education and was for 11 years supervisor of Negro high schools in North Carolina. He has been president of Elizabeth City State Teachers College since 1939; he is president of the North Carolina Negro Teachers Association and is a lay reader and vestryman in the Episcopal Church. He has completed course requirements for his doctorate at Teachers College, Columbia University, and holds an honorary doctor's degree in education from Morgan College. His broad experience should be of great value in his new post as associate executive director of SRC.

Paul D. Williams



The appointment of Dr. Trigg as full-time associate director is in line with the expansion of SRC's staff during the past year and the working out of plans to expand the Council's activities, with the cooperation of enlarged membership, to all sections of the South and intensify action on regional, state and local levels to build a more prosperous and more democratic life for all Southern people. The keynote of the annual meeting was this expansion and intensification of activity.

Program — Past and Future

Dr. Odum, in a talk opening the meeting, recalled that when SRC was set up it was tentatively agreed that the most important domestic problem in the United States was the achievement of regional equality and balance in the nation; and that within this framework race relations and the attainment of greater opportunity for all peoples were our most specific problems. He said that he was now more than ever convinced that these were the basic principles upon which SRC must do its work. He pointed out that SRC members can devote only limited time to these problems and urged that the central office be strengthened further and given the responsibility "to see that the job is done." Dr. Odum urged that SRC "be made a Council for all the people, that all of us alike may share equally in the development of a great nation."

Dr. Guy B. Johnson, executive director, reporting on SRC activities during 1945, said the size and efficiency of the Council staff had been increased and that SRC membership had more than doubled; that thousands of Southerners had been acquainted with the work of the Council through conferences, publications and publicity. He outlined the activities of SRC through state interracial committees, local committees, cooperation with other agencies, conferences and advisory services, research projects, work on veterans' problems, campaigns for political equality and economic opportunity; he praised the work of the Council fellows in research and other activities.

Dr. Johnson said there were certain trends and issues in the South which the Council must work on wholeheartedly: (1) employment opportunities for Negroes, (2) fair treatment of Negroes in the administration of veterans' services, (3) law enforcement and the relation of the police to race friction, (4) the danger of the revival of extra-legal forces, (5)

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To attain through research and action programs the ideals and practices of equal opportunity for all peoples in the region.

increasing political participation by Negroes, (6) equalization of facilities and opportunities in education, health, transportation and recreation.

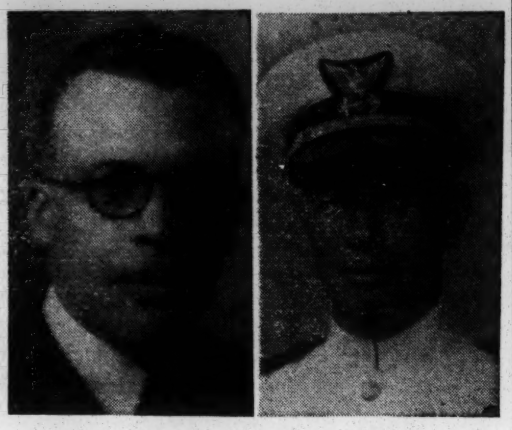
He stressed the need to develop the Council structure in terms of mass membership, with emphasis on state and local action; the need for greater financial support; and the importance of a clearer definition of the aims and strategy of SRC.

Dr. Ira DeA. Reid, associate executive director, opened his report by offering suggestions for more vigorous programs by SRC: (1) the need for full cooperation with agencies and individuals with specific programs in political education and action, and economic action; (2) the need for research and action in regional problems in human relations, law enforcement and observance, education, social security and household employment. Dr. Reid said he was aware of the urgency of all these problems, but suggested that SRC first create through research and education a public awareness of the problems themselves, and then design programs for local and South-wide action to solve them. He urged again, as he did at the first SRC meeting, that the Council consider the possibility of organizing annual South-wide conferences of agencies to discuss and plan action on problems of the South.

Segregation Study

Dr. Reid then reported on an exploratory study, undertaken by the Council under his direction, of race separation in Atlanta's transportation systems and an analysis of how the "separate but equal" theory operates in practice. He said the study was initiated to determine whether action could or should be taken by SRC to seek equalization of transportation facilities.

The group voted, in the afternoon session, that the transportation study be expanded and applied to other Southern cities and that SRC executives map plans for action through community groups to seek equalization of transportation facilities under the law; the board also voted that the same type of study — showing the effects of race separation — be made in the fields of health and education. Both



Harold L. Trigg (left) is SRC's new, full-time Associate Executive Director. Commander Frank W. Spencer (right) is newly-elected Vice-President.

recommendations were made on condition that funds could be obtained for further research.)

Dr. George S. Mitchell, SRC director of veterans services, reported on the functions and plans of his recently established division. He said that, after study of information and laws related to the veteran, he had visited many cities of the South to study the administration of veterans' services at first hand. These visits, he said, convinced him of the need for Negro personnel in veterans' agencies to deal with Negro veterans and their problems. He said he was also convinced that on-the-job training is the one benefit for veterans, above all others, that best fits the needs of the South. He stressed the need for increasing the opportunities for such training and said that he would call on SRC members for help during his travels throughout the region.

Progress Reported

At the afternoon session the members heard reports from Mrs. M. E. Tilly, SRC field representative for Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee; and Mrs. Henry Havens, field representative for Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. Mrs. Tilly outlined the work of the Atlanta area committee to promote the appointment of Negro policemen and the practice of Negro doctors in the municipal hospital. She said the Atlanta group is cooperating with the Atlanta Urban League to gain improvement of Negro schools, and also outlined SRC's work in cooperation with the "workshops" for Methodist women throughout Georgia. Mrs. Havens told how the Norfolk Women's Council for Interracial Cooperation had successfully campaigned for the appointment of Negro policemen and suggested that Negro veterans who had served in the military police or Navy shore patrol are well-trained for such work. Mrs. Havens also reported that the Florida Interracial Council had voted to become a division of SRC and won the distinction of being the first state to take this step. She praised the South Carolina Committee as a "committee of action" and told of its decision to accompany Negro citizens to registration places to see that they are duly registered to vote and to be prepared to testify if they are denied their rights.

J. M. Tydings, chairman of the Kentucky Interracial Committee, was asked to report on the Kentucky Governor's Commission on Negro Affairs. Mr. Tydings said the Commission was a fact-finding body which had just completed a report which will afford a basis for "action supported by facts instead of grievances." He stressed the point that the Commission is a group interested in working *with*, rather than *for*, Negro citizens.

Other Action

In addition to action on Dr. Reid's report of segregation in transportation, the group approved the following other recommendations of the board of directors and standing committees:

1. Changed annual SRC membership dues from $1.00 per year to $2.00 and provided for a $5.00 sustaining membership.

2. Raised the subscription price of *The Southern Frontier* to $1.00 per year and approved the proposals to change the name of the magazine, to change the form to pocket-size and to publish each quarter a special issue devoted to a thorough study of one Southern problem or a set of related problems. (The new name of the publication was left to the discretion of the executive committee and will be announced later.)

3. Voted for technical amendments to SRC by-laws to clarify complications in the status of board members who become staff members; to delete the quorum requirement for annual meetings (and thus make practical functioning of such meetings possible under the proposed mass membership program); changed the official date of the annual meeting to the second Wednesday in November (previously October); provided for voting-by-mail on some matters at the discretion of the board of directors.

Resolutions

The many resolutions offered and adopted in the afternoon session were, in brief, as follows:

1. That the membership "reaffirm this 'action principle' as the policy of the Council" and that the Council "engage in only so much research as is necessary for the development of action based on adequate facts."

2. That SRC "urge upon President Truman, Senator Barkley, and all our elected representatives in Congress to prove to the people of this country and to the world that democracy can work in this country by holding HR7 before the Senate until the Senate has had a chance to vote upon it." (HR 7, bill to abolish the poll tax as a requisite for voting for federal officials, faces the threat of a filibuster.)

3. That SRC "praise the decision of Judge (T. Hoyt) Davis in the Georgia (primary election) case and urge that no attempts be made by responsible officials to circumvent this decision . . . "

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The Battle for the Ballot

By STETSON KENNEDY

Out of the 1944 primaries came 13 formal complaints to the U. S. Department of Justice, asking for criminal prosecution of election officials who denied Negroes a vote. However, five of these complaints were untenable because the complaints had not duly qualified to vote.

Two Deep South states have taken action to circumvent the Supreme Court's decision in the Texas case. South Carolina was the first; a special session of the State Legislature passed 147 bills eliminating from the statute books every discernable reference to primaries. This required wiping out even the laws against fraud in primaries, and made necessary dual registration (once with the party for the primary, again with the State for the general election). Moreover, party officials are left with dictatorial power to say who shall vote in the primaries—and this power can be turned against whites as well as Negroes.

It is interesting to note that South Carolina's constitution provides that the State *shall* regulate primaries and provide punishment for fraud therein. This may constitute ground for legal action against the unregulated primary.

Dangerous Devices

The only other state which shows any symptom of following South Carolina's dubious lead is Georgia. The new constitution adopted by that State in 1945 omits all references to primaries; and there may be elements in the State which will try to eliminate all statutory reference to primaries. But if Georgia is wise she will heed the warning of her League of Women Voters: "Unregulated primaries may easily become a tool in the hands of the professional politicians and result in the disgrace of our State . . . If we follow the line of freeing our primaries from all regulations, we are jeopardizing our elections, the foundation upon which our government rests."

In some of the Deep South states there have even been proposals for a return to the convention system of nominating candidates. Fortunately no state has yet been so foolish as to do this. As the *Miami Herald* commented when the proposal was made in Florida, "If candidates were selected in convention, state officers would not be the choice of the electorate but of a handful of persons, open to manipulation by politicians frequently influenced by conniving interests who would control the State for their purposes."

There is much in both the Classic and Texas case decisions to indicate that the Supreme Court will not tolerate racial discrimination via the "private" mechanism of either an unregulated primary or a convention, inasmuch as the state assumes responsibility for their actions by officially accepting their nominees.

Arkansas, however, has concocted a devious scheme which seeks to limit the political rights of Negroes in a manner beyond the law. Shortly after the 1944 primaries in which an estimated 5,000 Arkansas Negroes participated for the first time—the State Democratic convention recommended that the legislature amend its primary law to read as follows:

> "Every organized political party shall have the right to prescribe the qualifications for its own membership and shall also have the right to prescribe qualifications for voting in its primaries, provided that no political party shall by rule or otherwise deny to any citizen the right to vote on grounds prohibited by the 15th Amendment to the Federal Constitution."

Then the Arkansas Democratic convention adopted rules limiting membership in the Democratic Party to:

> " . . . white electors who have openly declared their allegiance to, and are in good faith in sympathy with, the fundamental principles, purposes, objectives, and practices of the party . . . but party membership shall not be a test for voting in Democratic primary elections."

Next, the Party's principles were reformulated to include: preservation of the poll tax, preservation of all existing Jim Crow segregation laws, and preservation of the law prohibiting interracial intermarriage. Applicants for a Democratic primary vote may be required to furnish an affidavit showing that they meet these requirements; and they may be challenged by any election judge, candidate, or candidate's agent.

Arkansas' 1945 legislature made the parties self-governing as suggested, and also established separate primaries for State and Federal officials. And so while Negroes are not permitted to join the Democratic Party of Arkansas, nor run for public office on its ticket, some of them are enabled to vote in the Democratic primary, provided they are willing to swear allegiance to the Party's principles, aforementioned, and are *otherwise acceptable to Party officials.*

The Party evidently feels it can rely upon the reluctance of many Negroes to endorse Jim Crow, the poll tax, and a Party that denies them membership and candidacy; moreover, the Party reserves the power to adopt still other principles intolerable to Negroes; and finally, it has the discretionary power to decide which Negroes—and thus *how many of them*—meet its voting requirements.

Counter Tactics

Apart from what the Supreme Court may have to say about this scheme, there is much that Negroes themselves might do. If they could succeed in voting in the primary in sufficient numbers, it is likely that the competing candidates would soon be bidding for their support by promising to rectify the Party's discriminatory practices. Should the Negroes be kept from voting in numbers large enough to bring about such changes, they will have no alternative but to go into politics on their own, as they have in South Carolina.

This would shift much of the conflict from the primary to the general election, where Negro voters have the undeniable protection of the Federal Government. The aim of such a maneuver, however, should not be a permanent political party based on race, but merely to demonstrate to white Southerners that Negro Southerners are determined to shoulder their proportionate share of responsibility in the region's public affairs. By nominating their own candidates and getting out the Negro vote in sufficient strength to pose a threat to a white majority, the Negroes could confidently expect the Democratic Party to invite them into the fold.

For the sake of an opportunity to demonstrate their solidarity with rank-and-file white Democrats, Negroes might want to forego for the time being the nomination of Negroes. But that temporary concession should not be made for anything less than equal access, in practice, to the Democratic primary. One of the white supremacists' whitest hopes is cloaked in tongue-in-cheek phrases about granting the vote to "qualified Negroes of good character and intelligence." By such pronouncements they hope to lull Negroes into a false sense of certainty that the road to democracy is clear—when all the time what they have in mind are varia-

(*Continued on page* 4)

Editor: *November* 15, 1945

In the October issue of THE SOUTHERN FRONTIER containing my article on the poll tax there was also printed a report of the "possibility of a constitutional amendment outlawing the poll tax," quoting Senator George's opinion that this is the "proper approach," and citing Bilbo's willingness not to filibuster against such an amendment.

This report, which lacked any concrete indication of authorship, was so juxtaposed with my article that many readers might conclude that it was appended by me. To make it clear that such was not the case, I would appreciate your publishing this letter.

In my judgment, this proposed constitutional amendment, while it may have some sincere supporters, is in reality a snare and delusion to sabotage H.R. 7, the constitutional method of direct and immediate repeal of the polltax which the second annual meeting of the Southern Regional Council on November 11 *urged be given a filibusterless chance in the Senate.*

Sincerely,
Stetson Kennedy.

This is the last issue of THE SOUTHERN FRONTIER in its old form. In January it will come to you in convenient pocket-size — eight pages in-instead of four — designed for easier reading and better looks. Under SRC's new publications program, approved by the board of directors last month, the magazine will continue to be published monthly, and will bring you short, readable articles and news of the South-but each quarter it will be a big special issue devoted to a thorough study of one phase (or several related phases) of Southern problems and Southern development. The first big quarterly issue, next March, will present a broad study of the South by Rupert B. Vance, of the University of North Carolina.

Under the new publication program a one-year subscription to the magazine will be $1.00 per year, including the special quarterly issues, which will be from 40 to 50 pages in length and will have permanent value as a reference and study manual. For $2.00 per year the subscriber will receive the magazine plus all other publications — pamphlets and leaflets — of the Southern Regional Council, and also will be entitled to membership in SRC.

South Carolina SRC Group To Assist Negro Voters

Members of the South Carolina committee of the Southern Regional Council will assist Negro citizens in voter-registration under a resolution adopted by the group's executive committee recently.

State Chairman Marion A. Wright, of Conway, announced the decision of the committee, which was published in many newspapers. The resolution stated:

"That it is felt to be the duty of white members of our committee to lend assistant to South Carolina Negroes seeking to register for voting purposes where such Negroes meet all legal qualifications.

"Such assistance to be afforded by accompanying such Negroes to places of registration, observing the treatment accorded them, making a record of their observations and being prepared to testify, if necessary, to any discriminations which have been observed."

SRC Staffer Elected CIO Officer

The Southern Regional Council's Director of Public Relations, Ray Warwick, this month was elected second vice-president of the Atlanta Industrial Union Council, central body for the more than 30,000 CIO members in Atlanta.

A delegate to the AIUC from the Atlanta Newspaper Guild, Mr. Warwick was a trustee on the executive committee of the Atlanta CIO council for 1945. The election as vice-president is for the 1946 term. The Atlanta Industrial Union Council is the representative, policy-guiding body for the affiliated CIO unions in the area.

Pacific War Veteran Joins SRC Veterans Service Division

Harry L. Wright, veteran of three-and-a half years in the Marine Corps and 23 months in the South Pacific, joins the Southern Regional Council staff in January as assistant to Dr. George S. Mitchell, Director of Veterans Services.

Mr. Wright, a native of Jackson, Miss., and a graduate of Tuskegee Institute's business administration school, was a sergeant-major with the 51st Defense Battalion of the Marine Corps in the South Pacific. His past experience includes three years as a fiscal officer with the Farm Security Administration.

His appointment is the first of several assistants planned by Dr. Mitchell to carry out SRC's program for returning Southern veterans.

Battle for the Ballot

(*Continued from page* 3)

tions of the theme sounded by one Georgia official: "Negroes can still be required to recite the Declaration of Independence backwards and then be disqualified if they leave out any commas."

As for the more direct form of restriction — violence — its control and punishment is the responsibility of the U. S. Department of Justice. A few cases firmly prosecuted are all that is necessary to banish this method of disfranchisement forever.

The race is between die-hard white supremacists and the rising demand for democracy. The emancipation of Negroes from second-class citizenship is not one of those things which can be postponed any longer. The Deep South is confronted with the absolute necessity of undergoing this *democratic* revolution now.

There is no reason why the transition from white supremacy to real democracy should not be painless. Gov. Chauncey Sparks of Alabama and Gov. Millard Caldwell of Florida have taken the lead in publicly recognizing that Negroes must be granted their right to vote. As *The Floridian* says, "Negroes are citizens. Therefore they have the right to vote in primaries, state, national and local elections." And it goes on to say, "Under the prevailing system Negroes are automatically forced into the Republican Party. A magnanimous gesture is all that is required to bring thousands of them within the Democratic fold."

It now appears that the Deep South has the good sense to make this gesture. In addition to admitting Negroes to the 1944 primaries (which involved candidates for Federal offices), more and more cities are admitting Negro voters to the Democratic primaries in local elections. One of the latest to do this was Athens, Georgia, which the *Atlanta Journal*, said was a "sane and hopeful example."

SRC Annual Meeting

(*Continued from page* 2)

4. That SRC urge support programs "to promote fair employment practices . . .," "to assist in the attainment of full employment;" "to insure a maximum of at least 25.00 per week as unemployment compensation; to insure a basic minimum wage of 65 cents per hour."

5. That SRC "urge support of legislation . . . to equalize educational opportunity . . . without regard to race, color, or creed . . . "; " . . . urge . . . that surplus war property be distributed . . . to increase the facilities for the technical education of Negroes, particularly in the Southern region."

6. That SRC believes "that the United States Employment Service should remain under control of the Federal Government."

7. That SRC work to insure that "plans for improvement of educational opportunity through the Southern region include funds for the improvement of Negro schools proportionate to the existing need . . . "

It was voted, too, that the executive director prepare a resolution expressing SRC's appreciation for Dr. Reid's services as part-time Associate Director and the hope that he "will continue to maintain his work with the board and in collaboration with the Council;" also that a resolution be prepared thanking Atlanta University, host to the meeting, for its hospitality.

Executive Director Johnson recently issued a statement to the newspapers and news services, expressing regret that Dr. Reid was not able to assume full-time duties as director, saying, "We are delighted that Dr. Reid has consented to continue on the Council staff and to give us the benefit of his energy and ability as Research Consultant."

Board Members

Of the 11 members of the board of directors whose terms had expired and who were elected to succeed themselves the following had accepted when *The Southern Frontier* went to press:

Rufus E. Clement, Atlanta; Leonard Hass, Atlanta; E. A. McDowell, Louisville; L. D. Milton, Atlanta; F. D. Patterson, Tuskegee, Ala.; Forrester B. Washington, Atlanta; J. W. Seabrook, Fayetteville, N. C.

David D. Jones, Greensboro, N. C., was elected to the board to succeed Dr. Horace M. Bond.

Of the 19 new board members elected the following have so far accepted:

Armand May, Atlanta; J. R. Henderson, Atlanta; Rabbi Stanley Brav, Vicksburg, Miss.; Marion A. Wright, Conway, S. C.; John A. Griffin, Atlanta; P. H. Easom, Jackson, Miss.; Alfred Mynders, Chattanooga; Aubrey Williams, Montgomery, Ala.; Hodding Carter, Greenville, Miss.; J. M. Tydings, Lincoln Ridge, Ky.; Mrs. Warren Zeuch, Vero Beach, Fla.; and R. P. Daniel, Jacksonville; C. H. Parrish, Jr., Louisville, Ky.